

REMARKS

Claims 1-23 are pending in the application. In an Office Action mailed February 2, 2005, Claims 1, 6, 7, 13, 15, 18-20, 22, and 23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b). Claims 2-5, 8-12, 14, 16, 17, and 21 were indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 1, 15, and 19 have been amended as indicated above to clarify the invention. Claims 2, 17, and 21 have been canceled and Claims 24-27 added by way of this amendment. In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks that follow, applicant respectfully submits that the application is now in condition for allowance.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 1, 6, 7, 13, 15, 18-20, 22, and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 1,245,638, issued to Trcka, or U.S. Patent No. 4,508,327, issued to Ersoy. Applicant respectfully disagrees.

However, to expedite allowance of the application, applicant has amended independent Claims 1, 15, and 19 to contain subject matter indicated as allowable by the Examiner. Moreover, the Examiner has indicated that Claims 2, 17, and 21, among others, are allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicant notes that Claim 1 has been amended to contain all the limitations of Claim 2, its base claim, and all intervening claims as indicated as allowable in the Office Action. Further, Claim 15 has been amended to contain all the limitations of Claim 17, its base claim, and all intervening claims as indicated as allowable in the Office Action. Claim 19 has been amended to contain all the limitations of Claim 21, its base claim, and all intervening claims as indicated as allowable in the Office Action. For at least this reason, applicant submits that independent

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Claims 1, 15, and 19 are allowable over the cited and applied references. Accordingly, applicant respectfully requests that the 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) rejections of these claims, and all claims depending thereon, be withdrawn.

New Claims 24-27

New Claims 24-27 have been added to further point out and distinctly claim the novel aspects of the claimed embodiments of the present invention. Applicant submits that the prior art, alone or in combination, does not teach or suggest applicant's claimed embodiments of the present invention as recited in Claims 24-27. Therefore, applicant submits that new Claims 24-27 are allowable over the cited and applied references.

Moreover, applicant notes that Claim 24 has been amended to contain all the limitations of Claim 3, its base claim, and all intervening claims as indicated as allowable in the Office Action. Further, Claim 25 has been amended to contain all the limitations of Claims 4 and 5, their base claim, and all intervening claims as indicated as allowable in the Office Action. Claim 26 has been amended to contain all the limitations of Claim 8, its base claim, and all intervening claims as indicated as allowable in the Office Action. Claim 27 has been amended to contain all the limitations of Claim 12, its base claim, and all intervening claims as indicated as allowable in the Office Action. For at least this reason, applicant submits that new independent Claims 24-27 are allowable over the cited and applied references. Accordingly, allowance of these claims at an early date is solicited.

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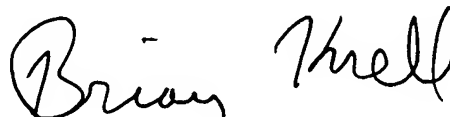
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CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, applicant respectfully submits that the present application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and reexamination of the application, as amended, and allowance of the claims at an early date is solicited. If the Examiner has any questions or comments concerning this matter, the Examiner is invited to contact applicant's undersigned attorney at the number below.

Respectfully submitted,

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